



**National Recreation  
and Park Association**

22377 Belmont Ridge Road  
Ashburn, VA 20148-4501  
703.858.0784  
Fax 703.858.0794  
[www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contact:**

Jennifer Hoyer  
703.858.2160  
[jhoyer@nrpa.org](mailto:jhoyer@nrpa.org)

**AAPRA and NRPA Award Top Honors to Six Park and Recreation Agencies**  
*National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management*

ASHBURN, Va. - September 25, 2007 – The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA) in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) presented six agencies with National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management at the 2007 NRPA Congress & Exposition in Indianapolis, Ind. along with proud sponsor Musco Lighting, LLC.

The most prestigious award of its kind, the Gold Medal honors communities throughout the United States that demonstrate excellence in long range planning, fiscal resource management, citizen support systems, environmental stewardship, preservation, technological integration, program planning and assessment, professional development, agency recognition and services for special populations.

**Gold Medal honors are awarded across five classes based on population served, in addition to a state park award that is given every other year. This year's winners include:**

**Class I (population 250,000 and over)**  
Cleveland Metroparks, Ohio

**Class II (population 100,001 – 250,000)**  
Westminster, Colo.

**Class III (population 50,001 – 100,000)**  
Bloomington, Ind.

**Class IV (population 25,001 – 50,000)**  
Westerville, Ohio

**Class V (population 25,000 and less)**  
Frankfort Square, Ill.

**State Parks System**  
Tennessee Dept. of Environment & Conservation

Four finalists were chosen in each of six classes based on written responses to a formal application. Finalists then submitted master/strategic plans and twelve-minute videos featuring their agency and achievements. The 2007 Gold Medal Judging Committee met for two days in July of 2007 to determine the Grand Plaque recipients.

Winners were announced live, onstage during the Opening General Session of NRPA's Congress & Exposition by Musco Lighting CEO, Joe Crookham.

For more information on the Gold Medal Awards or NRPA's comprehensive awards program, visit [www.nrpa.org/awards](http://www.nrpa.org/awards).

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**The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration** is a non-profit organization founded to advance knowledge related to the administration of recreation and parks; to encourage scholarly efforts by both practitioners and educators that would enhance the practice of park and recreation administration; to promote broader public understanding of the importance of parks and recreation to the public good; and, to conduct research, publish scholarly papers, and sponsor seminars related to the advancement of park and recreation administration.

#### **National Recreation and Park Association**

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of more than 20,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, recreation initiatives, and conservation of natural and cultural resources.

Headquartered in Ashburn, Va., NRPA works closely with local, state and national recreation and park agencies, citizen groups and corporations to carry out its objectives. Priorities include advocating favorable legislation and public policy; continuing education for park and recreation professionals and citizens; providing professional certification, university accreditation, research and technical assistance; and increasing public awareness of the importance of parks and recreation. For more information, visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org).